UNDERSTANDING MILITARY STRATEGY
A PRIMER

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The word ‘Strategy’ has originated from the Greek word ‘strategia’. It is a word of “military origin” but now it is used all – over especially in the corporate world.


Approach to it’s development!
✓ By matching/exploring the “Ways” and “Means” in order to achieve the “Ends”.

✓ “Ways” are the “How” component, “Means” are “Resources/Tools” available to us and “Ends” are the “National Military/Defence Objectives” to be achieved.

✓ Strategy is underpinned by a Doctrine.
Diplomacy + Informational + Economic + Social + Political

☑ Unlike in the past, the IVth Generation War uses all available networks – Political, Economic, Social, etc.

☑ Accordingly, all the above Means/Tools of “Comprehensive National Power” have to be meshed with the tool of “Military” to produce an wholesome “National Military/Defence Strategy”.

WHAT ARE THE “ENDS” WE ARE SEEKING?
NATIONAL MILITARY/DEFENCE OBJECTIVES

- Prevent war through strategic and conventional deterrence across the full spectrum of military conflict, to ensure the defence of India, our National Interests and Sovereignty.

- Prosecute military operations to defend territorial integrity and ensure a favourable end state during war to achieve stated/implied political objective(s).

- Provide assistance to ensure Internal Security, when called upon to do so.

- Be prepared for contingencies at home and abroad to render Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Aid to Civil Authority and International Peacekeeping, when called upon to do so.

- Enable required degree of self-sufficiency in defence equipment and technology through indigenization to achieve desired degree to technological independence.
**PURPOSES OF A STRATEGY**

- ShapE a favourable positive stable, secure and safe Security Environment.
- Employment of Military during Peace or No War/No Peace.
- Employment of Military during Conflict.
- Plans for Force Development/Modernisation.
- Military Diplomacy *viz* Peace keeping missions, Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR), Military Operations Other Than War etc.
- Aid to Civil Power *viz* Internal Security duties, HADR, etc.

**WHAT IS NOT THE PURPOSE OF A STRATEGY?**

- To provide a conceptual framework; which is a purpose of a Doctrine.
- To bring out any Policy matter. Shortcomings, if any, should be settled during policy-making stage itself in consultation with the Policy-makers and Strategy devised accordingly.
- Strategy is not a theory unlike a Doctrine.


1. RM’s Op Directive
2. Ch COSC/COSC Directive (Issued to their respective Services & HQ IDS)
3. Joint Military/Defence Strategy (Underpinned by Joint Armed Forces Doctrine)
4. Military Strategy of Individual Services (Underpinned by Services Doctrine)
The process takes into consideration -

- Vision, Aim, Interests, Objectives, Policy and Security Strategy at National Security Level which have wider connotations, of which “Military/Defence” is only a one but an all-important domain.

- Policy/Higher Directives issued by the concerned stakeholders/Ministries who also have a role to play in defence of the Nation viz MoF, MEA, MHA, MoRSTH, etc to their respective Departments to coordinate relevant military issues with the MoD.

- Experience/Lessons learnt during war/ exercises, etc.
- Existing Doctrines.
- Threat Perception.
- Historical Evidence.
- Technological Developments.
- Availability of Resources.
- Principles of War.
- An existing “Policy” or “Strategy” may be referred to by the Strategist during formulation/revision of new/existing Strategy.
- Consideration of Risks, mid-course corrections, etc.
LEVELS OF STRATEGIES

✓ **National** – A broad and generic Strategy (unlike the Operational and Tactical levels) since it is only one of the sub-components of “National Security Strategy”. It corresponds to the “National Strategic” level of War wherein the Union War Book can be invoked by the Cabinet Committee of Security, if so warranted.

✓ **Operational** – This level corresponds to the level of war hovering between “Military Strategic” and “Operational” levels. It determines the manner of application of Military Power and orchestration of military activities respectively.

✓ **Tactical** – It deals with tactics and corresponds to the tactical level of War.

Please Note: - *There is a distinct possibility that levels of Strategy and War may often get “blurred.”*
Services prepare Long Term Perspective Plans (LTPP).

On the basis of LTPP, HQ Integrated Defence Staff facilitates integration of the plans of the three Services and evolves a comprehensive Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan.

The above plans are classified in nature. However, the unclassified portion is published in the form of Technological Perspective Capability Road Map. It is in “open domain”.

**SOME ACTIONS - POST PREPARATION OF JOINT MILITARY & SINGLE SERVICE STRATEGIES**
EFFECTIVENESS OF A STRATEGY

Any Strategy is effective so long it meets the following criterion:

- Must flow from a Policy in the sense it should seek to achieve the Aims of the Political leadership.
- Must be realistic in application.
- Should have an unifying idea.
- Strategy can be long term-term but should not stretch beyond, say a decade or so, lest it becomes speculative.
- Must provide a “golden bridge “ to the future for all the stakeholders.
- Even while Policy can change with political leadership, the Strategy should be flexible enough to adapt to the new policy direction, if so warranted.
- Strategies are generally in in “close domain”. However, excerpts can be put in “open domain”. National Security Strategy, being broad & generic in nature should be in “open domain” and more so in any stable democracy.
- Reflects the views of all the stake holders.
NOTES